SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE Present Danger OF THE RELIGION OF THE Church of England FROM

I. The *PAPIST*.

II. The *ATHEIST* and *DEIST*.

III. The *DISSENTERS*.

LONDON,

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SOME

Consideration, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Subject of this *Phamphlet* may be thought very Surprizing, if not very Superfluous, after the Declaration of the *Queen*, *Lords* and *Commons*, that the *Church of England*, *as by* Law *Establish'd*, is now in a Flourishing Condition. But if the Reader will Reflect, that the *English* are a People, who allow no Infallibility to Man, or Councils of Men; and that since this Publick Declaration of the *Legislative Power*, we have seen Reasons Privately handed about, and urg'd in Conversation, that the *Church* is, notwithstanding, in *Danger*, he will think it Reasonable and Just, to Examine how far they are of force to justifie a *Clamour*, which is fill'd up, indeed, by not a few of the *Reverend Clergy* it self.

If we look on the *Memorial*, and the other Papers that were Publish'd by that *Party*, before this *Sessions of Parliament*, we shall find that they very plainly Insinuate (if I may use so *Moderate* a Word) that this *Danger* is not from any remote and distant *Fears*, such as are now Pretended; but immediately from the Majority of the *Bishops*, and the present *Ministry*: Not from *France*, but from *England*; not from Abroad, but from Home, and that so Eminent, that nothing but the most extraordinary Methods in Nature cou'd procure its safety, and stop the Impending Blow.

But if we look into the Reasons they now give for their Dreadful Pother of the *Churches Danger*, we find them dwindled into such Pigmy Fears, that it wou'd surprize a Man of tolerable Understanding, to find they cou'd ever reach the Heads, and so entirely possess the Hearts of Men, who both in their Writings and their Discourse, Exclaim against, and Ridicule the Fears of *Forty One*, when the *Laws* had been actually, and openly, and avow'dly Trampled on, and the *Liberties* of the *Subject* visibly and daily Invaded, as when it was with these Men.

When Hard Words, Jealousies and Fears,
Set Folk together by the Ears,
And make them Fight, like Mad or Drunk,
For Dame Religion, *as for* Punk:
Whose Honesty *they all durst Swear for,*
Tho' not a Man of them knew wherefore.

Hudibras.

But now, when there is no visible Assault on the *Rights* and *Immunities* of the *Church*; when there is no pretence made by any other Body of *Protestants* in *England*, to any of Her *Ecclesiastical Revenues*; when Her *Bishops* are Learned and Pious, and as Regular Observers of all the *Episcopal Functions*, as any of their Predecessors; when Her Majesty, who is head of the *Church* as well as *State*, was Educated in, and always Zealous for this *Church*; nay, and preserves in that Zeal so Eminently, as to give such Proofs of it, that no Prince ever gave before Her; bestowing on the Indigent part of the *Clergy* a considerable Branch of the Revenue of the Crown, to deliver, in time, the *Church* from a Shameful Scandal, which the Necessity of *Poverty* in too many of the *Ministers* brought on it. But now I say, when all this is done, to make all this Noise about meer imaginary Fears of the *Churches Danger*, is a Scandal to the *English* Understanding Abroad, and surprizing even to us who know the Tempers of the Men. What the *Queen* has done for them, was what neither Her *Uncle* nor *Grandfather* did; however they are Magnify'd by those, who ought to value Truth more than they do, to the Scandal of *Religion* it self; and from whom, even Gratitude it self cannot Extort one Favourable

ble Return. To expreſs ſuch an Alarm of the *Churches Danger* under ſuch a *Queen*, and ſuch *Biſhops*; when no *Right* or *Immunity* of the *Church* is attack'd, when daily Favours are pour'd on the *Clergy*, by the unexampl'd Zeal of Her Majeſty, when there is not ſo much as one about the *Queen*, in any *Power*, *Truſt* or *Poſt*, who has not always been Bred in, and Continued of the *Epiſcopal Church of England*, *as by* Law *Eſtabliſh'd*, muſt require Reaſons inſurmountable of its *Danger*, and that can admit of no Contradiction, elſe it is as Evident as the Sun at Noon, that all this Clamour is nothing but *Idle Jealouſies*, rais'd by *Knaves*, and believ'd by *Fools*, to Ruin our *Liberty*, and our *Laws*, and that Happy Eſtabliſhment we are now fix'd on by *Providence*. This is plain by the Inſtruments that have been made uſe of to promote our Fears, who have been all, to a Man, either profeſs'd *Jacobites*; and who, at the ſame time that they pretended to Write for the *Church* and *State*, acknowledge neither; defaming one with the Name of *SCHISM*, and the other with that of *REBELLION*.

To clear this Point a little farther, I ſhall caſt an Eye on thoſe Reaſons that are now urg'd againſt the Declaration of the *Queen*, *Lords* and *Commons*, *That the* Church *is not in* Danger; at leaſt, all that I can Recollect of what I have heard offer'd by the *Party*.

Firſt therefore, They tell us that they cannot but think the *Church* is in Danger, becauſe in the Service of the ſaid *Church*, we pray againſt the Danger it is in: And that theſe Prayers being Compos'd by the Biſhops, and Ordered to be Read by Her Majeſty, implys that it is Her Majeſties Opinion, that the *Church is in Danger*. That the *Church* is *Secondly* in *Danger* from *France*, while he entertains a Prince, or Pretended Prince, that lays Claim to this Crown, and that King ſupports this Claim by the whole Power of his Kingdom. *Thirdly*, That it is likewiſe in *Danger* from *Scotland*, by an Act paſt there for Arming and Training the *Heritors*; who becoming Diſciplin'd Men by Time and Application, can bring into *England* 60000 Men to Eſtabliſh *Preſbytery*, and Depoſe *Epiſcopacy*. *Fourthly* and *Laſtly*, That the ſureſt way to have the *Church* in *Danger*, is to ſuppoſe it to be in no *Danger*.

If I have not Worded these *Wise Reasons* in the same Phrase they are handed about in, the Defect is in my Memory, which only retain'd the Sense, without the Phraseology. *Secondly*, If I have, by this means, left any Word out, which the Party may think of weight and force (for the weakness of the Cause cannot indeed part with so small a Support as a Word, since, in reality, it is all built on *Words* and no *Reason*) I beg their Pardon, and assure them it was not out of Design, but Necessity in the Natural Defect of a bad Memory; yet I dare be bold to say, that I have omitted nothing Material to the force of the *Reasons*; which now let us Examine.

The First derives the *Churches Danger* from the Prayers of the *Church* it self. But there can be nothing more Plain and Evident, than the Parties Prevarication in this Article, and how little this Prayer can justifie their Clamours, and the Methods they took to prevent their imaginary *Dangers*. Nor do these Gentlemen seem over Pious in taking their Appeal of Security from God, to place it in their own Mad Endeavours, as if they fear'd to trust the *Church* of God to his own Care, a Crime for which we find one in the Holy Scriptures struck Dead for. Next What kind of *Danger* is meant by the Prayer will be Evident from the Body of this Treatise, thence it will also be plain, that this has no Eye to the *Danger*, about which all this Clamour and all these Heats and Animosities were rais'd, and that the Remedy that was proposed by the Party against these Fears and this *Danger*, for the *Churches* Security, was not Adequate to the *Danger* aim'd at in the Prayer. I think no Man can Controvert this Truth, that all the Danger which the *Pinacle Zealots* suppos'd, and threaten the *Church* was from the *Dissenters* at Home. This is Evident from all their Pamphlets, and undeniable from their *Occasional-Bill*, which was visibly and directly aim'd at the *Dissenters* only, as if the *Church* were intirely secure on all sides else, and that there only was weakness in the Fortification, which ought to be repaired, and if it was not, that the Ruin of the *Church* must inevitably follow; tho' it had flourish'd for Seventeen Years without any other Security, than it now possest, and when the very Party it self do openly assert That the *Dissenters* had a Prince, who

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Particularly and Partially indulg'd their Desires, and endeavour'd to fulfill all their Wishes. But the *Danger* which is aim'd at by the Prayer, is that *Danger* which sunk the *Primitive Parity* of the *Christian Church*, *Sin*, *Pride*, *Cruelty*, *Avarice*, *Malice*, and the like, which too early in the *Church* destroy'd Brotherly Love, let in Divisiory, breed Heats and Animosities, and rent that Seamless Garment, which *Christ* left *Pure*, *Holy*, and *One*. These are the Dangers the *Church* pray against, and these are the real *Dangers* that threaten our *Church*, and are too Eminently visible in Her Members, and some of Her Teachers too. Against this Evil the *Occasional-Bill* could be no Defence, *Prayer*, *Good Life*, *Charity*, *Temperance*, *Humility*, *Chastity*, and the other admirable Vertues that are taught by the *Church*, and commanded by the *Gospel*, are the only Security against this *Danger*. 'Tis not the Multiplying the Laws of Man, but the Observing the Precepts of God, that can in this make the *Church* safe and out of Danger.

But it being plain that this was not the *Danger* trumpeted about by the Party, as hanging like the Sword of *Damocles* over the Head of *Episcopacy*, and ready to fall with Perdition on it, since the Laws push'd on were not against *Immorality*, *Drunkenness*, and *Prophaness*, but against *Occasional-Conformity*: It is a Plain and Scandalous Proof of the *Poor* and *Mean* Subterfuge these Gentlemen are fain to fly to, when they are press'd close to forsake their Follies, or shew Reasons for their persevering; that they are so Tenacious of a Word for the Identity of Sound, that the Signification will be of no use to them. Had they been really in fear for the *Church* on this Head, why did they apply a Remedy that could have no Effect on the Distemper? Why did they not make deterring Penalties on the Debauchery of all Teachers, on their *Avarice*, *Prophaness*, and *Immorality*.

'Tis plain that they have no Reasons to give for all the Disturbance they have rais'd in the Nation, on Accouut of Fears of the *Churches Danger* from the *Dissenters*, at least that they have Honesty and Courage enough to own; and therefore out of Principle of Obstinacy bring Instances of what has nothing to do with the Point in Hand. Had the Prayer expressed a

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desire of Protection from Heaven against the *Churches Danger* from the *Protestant Dissenters*, it had been an Instance worthy Notice, but as it is, it is the poor and wretched Refuge of Routed Argument.

The Second Ground of these Gentlemens Fears for that *Church*, of which they own such *Pious* and *Zealous Members*, is from *France*. This is really much more Ridiculous than the First.—— For thus it runs, *France* supports a *Pretender* to the *English* Throne, therefore we'll make a Law against *Occasional-Conformity*, which will keep several *Dissenters* out of the Mayoralty of Corporations, Memberships of Parliament, *&c.* whose Principles are directly contrary to *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*, that must attend the *Pretender* into *England*; and leave these places open to the Possession and Enjoyment of such Men, who being profess'd for *Arbitrary Power*, imply a *Passive Submission* to its Attendant *Popery*. *Risum teneatis Amici?* Are not these admirable *Polititians?* Is it not great Pity that the Administration of Affairs is not in the Hands of Men of such wonderful Penetration? But in the Name of Wonder, what do these Noisie Gentlemen mean by this Reason? Would the *Occasional-Bill* keep out the *French?* Are not the Confederated Powers of *Europe* endeavouring to cut off these Apprehensions? Can any thing contribute more to the Happy Event of these Endeavours, than *Peace* and *Unanimity* at Home? Which *Occasional-Bills* had very near destroy'd and left us an Open, and Defenceless Prey to that very Enemy which these Gentlemen now pretend to fear the *Danger* of the *Church* from. Whence it is Evident, that they were rather for encreasing the *Danger* by our Divisions, than removing it by our Union.

From what has been said on this Head it is sufficiently made appear, that the Clamour that was made by them of the *Churches Danger*, was by their own *Endeavours*, *Pamphlets*, and *Bills*, clearly and only expected from the *Dissenters*, and not from *France*, and that therefore this was no Reason at all for their Fears of the *Church*, which had so Alarm'd them, and produc'd in them all those Heats, Debates, Struggles, *&c.* against the *Whiggs*, who have all along been of their Side, and wrote for their Cause and Party. The Reason therefore was of no

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manner of use to the Justification of the *NOISE* and *MAGNIFY'D FEARS.*

The third Reason seems the most plausible, and comes nearer to their purpose. The *Scots* are generally indeed *Presbyterians*, and those sending an Army to joyn our *Dissenters* here might be of Dangerous Consequence, not to our *Church* alone, but to our *Laws* and *Liberties* too.

I am very sensible that this is a Point which has been very warmly urg'd by many Gentlemen of good Sense, and I must almost say,

Pudet hæc Opprobria Nobis
Et dici posse, & non potuisse refelli.

It is certain that there is an Act pass'd in *Scotland* to the purpose of what is mentioned in the Reason of the Party; which I wish had never been pass'd; not from any Apprehensions I am in of those terrible Effects which these Gentlemen denounce from it; but because it has afforded the only handle to the *Malecontents* to make Converts by the plausibility of the Appearance. But let us a little consider the Reason, and see if the Danger thence be as formidable as they pretend.

First, The ill Consequences of this Act are in a great measure cut off by a Union betwixt the two Nations, of which, by Her Majesties admirable Conduct, we have now so fair a Prospect, and by the Disposition both Nations seem now to have to *Peace* and *Unity*, and those Preleminaries which are already adjusted.

Next, Should this Union never take Effect, I can never suppose that the *Dissenters* of *England* would ever run the hazard of losing all their *Estates*, *Liberty*, and *Toleration*, now secured to them by Law, for the meer hopes of an *Imaginary Dominion*. For first they must either succeed in their Design or not. If they succeed they may perhaps Suppress the *Church*, but how long they will enjoy the Benefit of so Infamous a Treason lies in the Power of the Army they should call in, to which they

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must likewise submit their *Lives* and *Property*; and how ill Guardians an Army is of both, the Usurpation of *Oliver Cromwell* is too fresh an Instance to suffer them to make again so dangerous an Experiment. But there is no way of continuing this Power, thus obtained, but by an Army, and an Army is always liable to be corrupted, either by the Politick or the Rich, and so turn against those very Men that first rais'd and employ'd them, as is Evident from Numberless Instances of History. The *Dissenters* therefore, we may justly suppose, love themselves better than to part with the firm Legal Security they now enjoy, for one that is so very Precarious, and depending in the *Whim* and *Humour* of so Licentious a Body as an Army must be however rais'd, or regulated.

But if they should not succeed they can expect no Favour nor Quarter from true *Englishmen*, and all the *Moderate Churchmen* wou'd be as Zealous against them then, as the highest *Tantivy* in the Nation. This, therefore, would be so Foolish, as well as Black a **Treason** and **Ingratitude**, that I see no tollerable Reason to believe the **Dissenters** can be Guilty of it.

But if this Army be not joyn'd, or call'd in by our Parties at Home, it is a Trifle against our whole Nation, and would only, by an Invasion, draw certain Ruin on themselves and Country, as they always did in the time of our Ancestors, when ever they attempted the like.

There is therefore no real Ground of **Fear** and **Danger** to the **Church** here, where the Interest of **Dissenter** and **Church**, and every true **Englishman** joyns in Opposition, and therefore (tho' the only Specious Pretence) of no real force for these *Clamours*, and not at all provided against by the *Occasional-Bill*, which would be but a Cobweb Defence against 60000 *Scots*; and the only way to tempt the **Dissenters** to listen to such a Proposal, or to form such a Design.

The last Reason is so *Merry* a *Paradox*, that I don't think it worthy an Answer, tho' Magnify'd by the Party as a *Clincher*, that is their Word, a dead doing terrible Blow to all the *Low-Church*. Let them Triumph in Things that are not

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Intelligible, while we are humbly Content to yield to **Reason**, and meddle only with what is the Object of **Understanding**. Men of such Noble *Implicit Faith*, are well prepar'd for *Transubstantiation*, to which I leave them in their *Fairy-Land* of **Danger**, and advance to my *Considerations on the real Danger of the Religion of the Church of* **England**.

Considerations on the Danger of the Religion *of the Church of* England *from the* Papist, Atheist, Deist, *and* Dissenter.

BEfore we Examine into the **Danger** *of the* Religion *of the Church of* **England**, it will be necessary to define what we mean by *it*, and then we shall easily discover, who are Enemies to *it*, and by Consequence from whence the Danger, that threatens *it*, arises. The Reader must not here expect a Logical Definition, compriz'd in a few Words, since it is impossible to give a just Draught of the *Religion* of the *Church* of **England** shorter, than it is express'd in Her *Articles* and Her *Canons*, and in the *Holy Scriptures*. However, since every *Article* and every *Precept* of this *Religion* will not fall, immediately under our Consideration, I shall only touch on those Heads, which have an immediate Relation to my present Undertaking.

The *Religion* therefore of the *Church* of **England** being drawn from the Gospel of our Lord, and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, consists of Subjects of our *Faith*, and Duties of *Action*, and these so United that they cannot clash with each other. The Subjects of *Faith*, which we generally call *Doctrinals* can never oppose, contradict, or be inconsistent with the *Moral Duties of Action*, which are taught by the same *Religion*. For that would be to make that *Religion* at War with it self, and composed of *Contradictions*, which must destroy the **Whole**. The Doctrinal parts of *Religion* are those which, generally speaking, constitute the Features, (if I may use that Word) or Characteri-

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ſtick of particular *Churches*, by which they are diſtinguiſh'd from each other; as the Features of Men diſtinguiſh their Faces.

The *Moral Duties* are thoſe, which are Eſſential to all *Chriſtian Churches*, and inſeparable from their very Nature, and diſtinguiſh them from all Congregations of *Infidels* and *Idolaters*, as the Humane Form does a Man from a Beaſt. 'Tis true, Beaſts have ſomething Analogous to Reaſon, and parts neceſſary to conſtitute their ſeveral Species, but both theſe are vaſtly ſhort of the *Nobleneſs* and *Perfection* of Man. So all *Religions* have ſomething which aims at *Morality*, but Lamely and with ſuch Imperfection, as makes no approaches to the Divine *Morals* of the *Goſpel*, or what is all one, the *Religion* of the *Church* of **England** built entirely on it.

The **Doctrinals** have been often Controverted by Men of Learning, and Men of Unqueſtionable Senſe and Policy; but I think it will be a difficult matter to find any Man that owns the Lord **Jeſus Chriſt**, who ever durſt Controvert his Plain and Evident Principles of **Action**. The *Credenda* have been the Argument of Debate of all the Fathers of the *Catholick Church* for theſe 1700 Years, while in the midſt of their Heat for thoſe, they have agreed in the *Agenda*, and that even while their Animoſities for the firſt, have made them forget the admirable Duties of the laſt.

The *Religion of the Church of* England, delivers our *Faith* and its Holy Founder, giving the Characteriſtick of his Diſciples, *Love one another*, *Love thoſe that Hate you*; and the like. *Love and do what you will.* And ſumming up his whole Law in a few Words, *Love God above all things, and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* The deſtroying therefore this *Goſpel* of **Love**, is a deſtroying the *Religion of the Church of* England; as the Deſtruction of the Eſſential Form of Man, is the Deſtruction of Man.

Whoever, therefore, let's his Zeal for **Doctrinals** eat up his regard to this *Eſſential*, *Endangers* the *Religion of the Church of* England, and brings a *Scandal* upon it: But this generally proceeding from *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Avarice*, *Luxury*, *Luſt*, and the like, our **Saviour**, and from him the *Religion of the Church*

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of England, Teaches us *Humility*, *Beneficence*, *Temperance*, *Chastity*, and the like, as *Essential* to that *Religion*; and whoever is carry'd away with a *Noisie Pretence* for **Doctrinals**, without regard to the latter, *Endanger* this **Pure Religion**.

But on the other hand, since the Corruptness of Man, and his Indulgence to his Exorbitant Appetites, wou'd make him have little regard to these Precepts, if they were *Purely Humane*, the *Religion of the Church of* England Teaches us, That they proceed from a **Higher power**, that is, from the Supream of all Powers, **God** Himself. This *Holy Religion*, therefore Teaches the **Doctrinal Part**, to Enforce these **Moral Duties**, and make Men have a care of Breaking them, since impos'd by a **Power**, that must always know our Breach of them, and can and will Punish it.

As the very **Fundamental**, therefore, of all her *Doctrines* the **Church** assures us, That there is but **One God**, and that the Carving Image, to Worship, is *Idolatry*, and a Derogation from that **Deity**, a Destruction of our *Faith*, and in that of all our *Moral Actions*. That this *God*, for our sakes, and the perswasion of *Free-Agents* to Happiness, descended from Heaven in its *Second Person*, and became *Man*, and so delivered to us that **Religion** *of the* **Church** *of* **England**, that Teaches all these Excellent *Doctrines* and *Precepts*; and builds this on *Miracles*, which could not be done in Confirmation of it, but by the *Immediate Power of* **God** *Himself*.

The *Religion of the Church of* England, therefore, obliges us to Believe and Confess that all *Miracles* are Appeals to our Senses; by which Heaven made us Judges in our own Causes, and to yield to what was so Evidently for our own Good and Happiness, by the Evidence of our own Senses, and which we cou'd not deny without denying our *Own Being* as well as *His*. All those, by Consequence, who are for dividing our Worship betwixt the *Living God*, and *Stocks* and *Stones*, all those who are for Invalidating the Evidence of our Senses, the only Proof of this *Divine Religion*, are those who only can bring **Danger** to the *Religion of the Church of* England; all those who are for perswading us either, that there is

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no *God*, or that he regards not us, or our Actions, or that he did not reveal himself to us in the *Flesh*, and deliver this *Religion* to us: All those who deny, that *God* Made us by his *Power*, Redeem'd us by his *Love*, that is his *Son*, and Sanctify'd us by his *Holy Spirit*, that is the *Holy Ghost*, bring Danger to the *Religion of the Church of* England. For the **Church** of **England** is not Constituted of the *Temples*, made with hands, or the Barricades of *Laws*, made by *Man*, which those who have no share in the *Faith*, by Policy and Cunning may engross. But of the *Temples* of the *Holy Ghost*, the *Faithful*, the *Believers*, and *Just Livers* is the **Church of England**, or the **Church of God** Compos'd; and whoever inveigles away by Falacious and Sophistical Arguments, or allures by Vicious, tho' Prevalent Examples, any of its Members, brings Danger to the Church, by Robbing it of those Members.

I hope, in a *Christian* Country, there is no need of running thro' more particulars of our *Holy Religion*. Here are Heads enough to Discover the true Source of our **Fears**, and the Threats of our real **Dangers**. I shall therefore now proceed to a more particular Examination of each of those Parties, from whom come the most certain **Dangers** to our **Religion**; that being thus instructed we may no longer amuse our selves with the *Vain*, *Imaginary* Shadows of **Danger**, and never mind the **Reality**. But being by these Considerations set in a just View of its real *Jeopardy*, we may Unite against it in a true *Christian Love* and *Zeal*.

That we may pursue these Considerations with some Method, I shall reduce what I have to say to the following Heads, *viz.* The **Danger** of the *Religion of the Church of* **England** is in from

I. The *PAPISTS*.

II. The *ATHEIST* and *DEIST*.

III. The *DISSENTERS*.

And first of the Danger it is in from the *Papists*.

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This Branch of the Danger of the *Religion of the Church of* **England** from the *Papists* arises from several Heads, or Principles, which are all opposite to, and Destructive of our *Religion.*

The first *Danger* springs from their Principles, which shake the very Foundation of all *Religion*, and shares in that odious work with the *Atheist* and *Deist*. That is their dividing the Worship of God, either with *Stocks* and *Stones*, or the *Ghosts* of *Departed Men*, whom they place in Heaven at their Pleasure, and give them the *Mediatorship* of *Jesus Christ*, which is inverting the Order of Nature and Reason, and making *Man* give Laws to *God*, who only can and does give Laws to *Man*. It likewise affords a strong Handle to *Atheists* and *Deists* to laugh us out of *Religion*, when they can so plainly prove, that this Sect impose meer *Humane Inventions* on us from *Divine Revelation*, and turn the *Christian* Faith into *Legendary* Fable. When they by that means lessen the *Adoration* of *God*, and in that as much as in them lies, the *Being* of *God* himself.

Next they have by their *Modern* Essential of *Transubstantiation*, wholly destroy'd all the Proof of the *Christian*, or *Reveal'd Religion.* For the only way of promoting this Divine Faith to a Free Agent, as *Man*, which *Omnipotence* and *Eternal Wisdom* could find out was to recommend it by *Miracles*, and all these *Miracles* were Appeals to our Sense, which if Fallible, as they, by their weak Sophistry, would fain perswade us, we have trusted to false Witnesses, and nothing in the *Religion* remains certain; nay, this Uncertainty runs farther, and reaches every thing in the World, and introduces a Universal *Scepticism.* And this at once destroys all the Force of the Precepts of our Saviour, and entirely Banishes all *Religion* and *Moral Duty.*

This therefore is a *Danger* from *Popery*, which our *Holy Religion* has Reason to fear, while Her Members are liable to be Corrupted by the *Pseudo-Prophets* of this *Anti-Christian Congregation.*

'Tis true, that the *Danger* would not be so great from *Popery*, if this Doctrine were sufficiently consider'd by our *Protestants*; it is too Monstrous, too Shocking for *Sense* and *Reason*;

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too opposite to all the Sentiments of *Religion*; but they take care to disguise it, they gild the bitter Pill over, and rarely administer it, till they have previously prepared the Patient to receive it by his admission of more *Palatable Opinions*, tho' equally Destructive of the *Religion of the Church of England*.

They offer therefore to sight Luscious Baits, fitted for the *Pride* and *Luxury* of Men; that having Debauch'd our *Integrity*, they may the more easily Corrupt our *Judgment*. *Julian*, the *Apostate*, found *Ambition* and *Luxury* of more Use to him than *Severity*, and by the Rewards and Places of the Empire won more from the *Church*, than the Preceeding Persecutors by Fire and Faggot. And those, who could not be frighted from the Truth by *Menaces*, *Imprisonments*, *Tortures* and *Death*, were corrupted by **Place** and **Power**.

The *Romish Church* throws out the same Bait, it shows us a *Wealthy*, *Pompous*, and *Powerful* Clergy, who have an Absolute Dominion over the *Laity*, and in the midst of the Poverty of their Country enjoy *Grandure*, *Riches*, and *Plenty*. Where as the **Reformation** shows them divested of all this *Worldly*, or *Satanical Magnificence*, endowed with no more *Power*, nor *Wealth* than is necessary for preserving them in Order, and from Contempt. This makes too many among us Long for these Flesh Pots, and Onions of **Egypt**, and Loath the *Mannah* of the free and easie Discipline of our **Apostical Church**, and while they will not strive for proper Merit to secure their *Authority*, wish for Wealth and Dominion unbounded to hide their *Profligate Vices*, and maintain their Credit in the midst of *Drunkenness*, *Avarice*, *Luxury*, or *Ignorance*.

This has introduced into our *Churchmen*, (*Church* I was going to say) Principles inconsistent with the *Religion of the* Church *of* England. and more than once **Endangered** the best Constituted **Church** in the World. That is the *Jus Divinum* of Princes, by which they made it Damnation to Resist the Prince on any Account whatsoever, and gave him a *Despotic Power* of disposing of our *Lives*, our *Liberties*, and our **Religion** too, by this means enabling him to introduce *Popery*, *Mahometism*, or any other Sect he best liked, as *William Rufus* Swore he

he wou'd *Judaism*, if the *Jews* cou'd worst the *Bishops* in a Dispute of the *Divinity of our Saviour*. The Consequence of this *Doctrine*, soon after its Broaching, in *Charles* the Firsts time, was, That several Advances were made towards *Popery*; all the *Patriots* of the **Protestant Religion** were Alarm'd at the *Innovation*; our Country involved in *Civil Confusion* and *Blood*, and the Unhappy King deprived of his *Throne* and *Life*, and was so, a *True Martyr to the Cause of those* High-Flyers; who put him on Measures Destructive of our *Civil Rights*, and the *Religion of the Church of England*, which, by the fault of its Directors, sunk for some Years under its Enemies, to whom nothing gave Power to do it, but the *Follies* and *Faults* of its own Members, by interpolating *Doctrines*, which were no part of it, and so rendred it *Odious* and *Unpopular*.

Thus the Doctrines of **Popery**, and the Inclinations of our *Clergy* to Principles introductory of those Doctrines once already destroy'd the **Church**. From them, therefore, and their Principles the *Religion of the Church of England* is chiefly in *Danger*.

In both his Sons Reigns these very Principles had like to have brought the same Evils on our *Holy Religion*, tho' the *Danger* was Prorogu'd from the Reign of *Charles* II. to that of *James* II. when the **Papists** insulted the *Church* with the Doctrines She had affirmed, and bid Her now exercise Her **Passive Obedience**, in complying with the **Kings** *Religion*. Some of the *Clergy* comply'd, nay, wrote Books of their Conviction; and a famous *Nonjuring Bishop* wrote a *Catechism*, in which, Treating of the *Sacrament*, he made very near approaches to the very Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, especially in the First Edition, which, indeed, in the Second was a little quallify'd. And these false Members of our *Church* were most *Dangerous* to Her, and ever justly distinguish'd by the Name of *Papists in Masquerade*, or *Church Papists*: For those who are for *Arbitrary Government*, and placing *Man* on the Throne of *God*, giving *Divinity* to a *Frail Creature*, can never be for the *Religion of the Church of England*; by which they can never obtain that *Power* they aim at, nor any *Power* inconsistent with the Purity of Her *Apostilical Rules*. These, therefore, must be *Papists in Disguise*, and these, by like Consequence, bring *Danger* to the *Religion of the Church of England*.

There are another sort of pretended *Church of England Men*, who

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are only *Papists in Disguise*; and these are Men who abandon all manner of the *Duty of Religion*, and only make a *Noise* and *Clamour* about the **Name**; who declare for *Lewdness* and *Drunkenness*, both in *Practice* and *Discourse*; nay, who will give themselves the Liberty of Questioning and Ridiculing the *Holy Scriptures*, and yet will *Bluster* for the **Church**, as much as if they hop'd to be *Sav'd* in it, and by Her **Holy Religion**, tho' they neither Believe Her *Doctrines*, nor Obey Her *Precepts*.

These are Dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of England*, by fixing a *Scandal* on it, as if its Members were indulged in this *Infidelity* and *Lewdness*; and that too visibly, by seeing those very Men Caress'd and Extoll'd by some Divines, who ought to Rebuke them.

As this Scandalizes abundance of Weak Brethren, so it loses the *Church* many Pious Members, whose Good Intentions are frighted from a *Communion*, where such as these are acknowledged Members.

'Tis in these Men that the **Papists** are most Dangerous, and give the deepest Wounds; many wou'd not mind what they say, as *Profess'd Papists*, who, under the disguise of *Protestants*, swallow all they utter, and imitate all they do.

But, lest this shou'd seem a false Imputation on the **Papists**, it will be necessary for me to show, that by their Principles and Practice they may, and do do these things I lay to their Charge.

To do this effectually, we must take a view of **Popery** in its several parts of a *Numerous Clergy*, who have the *Consciences of the Laity in their Hands* to do what they please with.

The *English Popish Clergy*, as that of other Parts of *Christendom*, is devided into *Secular* and *Regular*; the *Secular Clergy* are those, who have no Vows of *Community*, and only take that of *Chastity*. Of these are those we call *Parsons*, or *Parish-Priests*, and as these are the Honestest, so they are the Poorest, have the least Power, and so are of the least Consideration in this Place.

The *Regular Clergy*, are the *Monks*, *Fryars* and *Jesuits*; the last of these are most Wealthy, the most Powerful, and the most Numer-

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ous, and most Learned, and by Consequence the most Dangerous. The other make a Vow to have no Consideration of any Ties of Blood, or Moral Duties of Religion in that Point, pretending that having made a Vow of *Chastity* and *Obedience*, whatever they get or are possess'd of by Inheritance, Pious Frauds, or Donation, belongs to the *Society*, or *Order* at their Death; and to give any away to Relations, tho' Starving, or in Charity to a Perishing Brother, is Defrauding their Order, and by Consequence an Impiety. What the two first Orders Possess in *England* is to me uncertain, tho' I am apt to believe it considerable: But I have been Credbily inform'd, that the *Jesuits* alone have 70000 *l. per An.* For, in King *James's* time, they made one purchase of 5000 *l.* a Year, besides which, they had before all the Estate of the *Prestons* in *Lancashire*, and other Countries of Sir *John Warner*; and have since great part of the Estate that shou'd, by Right, be Sir *Solomon Swales*, who is humbly Content to Want, while they Enjoy his Birth-Right, *Tantum Religio potuit suadere.*

After this let any Man consider them Masters of the Revenue of *England* all King *James's* Reign, and then Reflect what a *Mass* of Wealth and Land they must get together, which, to preserve and turn to their own and their Causes account, we shall see their Method immediately, from their known Principles and Practices, and by consequence, what **Danger** they threaten to the *Religion of the Church of England*, from their *Numbers*, *Principles* and *Wealth.*

As for their Numbers they are very considerable, and spread thro' every part of the Nation, and that not in a hidden obscure manner, but in the Front of Conversation. For they have Learning to introduce them, and no Conscience to confine them from assuming the Appearance of a *Religion* they abhor, because Absolutely Destructive of their *Gain* and their *Power.*

But a view of their Rise and their Methods will set this in a fairer Light. Their Founder, *Loyola*, was a Man skill'd in the Arts of a Subtle *Spanish Courtier*, had been a Soldier, and now worn out with the Particular and Natural Roguery of his Station, he consider'd how to make himself a distinguishable Character in the World, by something peculiar to himself. The **Reformation** had drawn many Countries from Obedience to the *See* of *Rome*, and there was

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ſcarce any Nation, that was not under the *Inquiſition*, where ſomething was not done againſt the *Pope*'s Authority. Hence he takes a Hint and forms a Deſign of a *Society*, which, from the Country it was to begin in, and the Conjucture of Time, and Affairs, promis'd the Succeſs that follow'd. Firſt, to gain it an Awful Reputation of *Holineſs*, he called it the *Society of Jeſus*, and made them the immediate *Black-Guard* of the *Pope*, being obliged to defend his Authority againſt all thoſe, who attack'd it, and this they perform'd with a Witneſs, at their Colledge of *Cleremont*, in *Paris*, where, among other Monſtrous *Theſes*, they Publickly defended, *That the* Pope, *in his own proper Perſon, was endowed with the ſame Infallibility that* Jeſus Chriſt *was.*

Loyola had conſider'd That to fix this Society in that *Intereſt* and *Grandure* in the World which he aim'd at, it was neceſſary it ſhould poſſeſs the Reputation of *Holineſs*, to engage the Commonalty; of *Learning*, to draw the Admiration of Men of *Figure* and *Parts*; of *Wealth* to ſupport all their Aims; of *Cunning* to manage their Affairs with Succeſs; but that the Governing part ſhould have no Religion, that they might loſe no Advantage of Intereſt, Power or Gain, which the Society might obtain. The Donations were what had hitherto given large Supports to the *Monks* and *Fryars*, yet fearing that would be too Dilatory, and too narrow a Fund for their great Deſign, Merchandize was thought an Expeditious and more Efficatious way to *Wealth*, the Fountain of *Power*, than the Pious Donations of the Religious, in an Age when the *Superſtition* of *Antiquity* began to grow out of Faſhion, and was at beſt, but weak in its ſtrongeſt Hold.

But for a Religious Society to Merchandize and Traffick openly for *Worldly Wealth*, when they had taken a *Solemn Vow of* Poverty, would not have been agreeable to that **Hypocriſie**, on which their Society was founded. It was therefore contriv'd that *Miſſioners* ſhould be ſent to the Richeſt parts of the *Indies*, under pretence of Preaching the *Chriſtian Faith* to the *Idolaters* of thoſe Countries. In this *Miſſion* they did not do as the *Apoſtles* did, Preach the *Goſpel* to the *Poor*, but introducing themſelves to *Abſolute Princes* by *Knick-knicks*, got Power from them to Traffick with their People; ſome of whom they won, by admitting ſtill a greater mixture of Idolatry into the Chriſtian Religion, than even the *Church* of *Rome* allows, as is Evident from the late Enquiries of the Congregation *de propaganda Fide* at Rome.

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But what ever Converts this *Mission* might bring to their *Church*, it has brought vast Riches into the Society, to support the great Expence they are at, in managing their Intrigues in all the Courts of the *Romish* Perswasion in *Europe*.

But this is not the only way of their getting Money, they admit Old and Young Women into a sort of Society, whom they call *Fille Devotes*, and all that these dye worth comes to the Society. If there be an Old Woman a dying they Insinuate themselves into her Grace, promise her Heaven, and get her House, Goods, and Estate from her Family and Children. This is plain to every one that has lived among them. Their Colledge at *Doway*, out of which they trick'd the *Monks*, is every Day enlarg'd by such Donations, insomuch that you may see whole Streets Incorporated into it, and the Doors Brick'd up. Besides this they will admit any Man to their Order, that can bring Money, or Estate, let him have neither *Sense*, *Understanding*, *Learning*, or *Religion*. To make amends for this they will receive any Man who believes the Cheat, and is really Bigotted enough to bring them the Reputation of *Holiness*; they will also admit any Ingenious Man of good Parts, and is capable of making a good Scholar, which gives them the Reputation of *Learning*; they will likewise be fond of any Man that is Master of Cunning, or of a Natural Sagacity, which they can turn to Business of any kind.

For these several Genius's they have several Stations in their Order. They have three Oaths, which they take peculiar to their own Society, besides the Vows of *Poverty*, *Chastity*, and *Obedience*, which are common to the other Regulars. The Probationer must be of some Years standing before he's admitted to the first; tho' all are in their turn; to the second there are only a Select part received, and that not till many Years Experience of their Parts and Qualifications in their Stations; but none are admitted to the third Oath but Men of Consummate Roguery; and these are the Governours, where all the Mystery of Iniquity is revealed, and all the Arcana of their Infernal Regiment discovered. These depute every one to their several Employs and Country to be Employ'd in. These have the disposal of all their Revenue in their respective Provinces and Destricts, which arises by the means aforesaid. A Reflection on these means brings into my Mind a Story, which I have been assur'd of the Truth of in *France* where it happen'd, which I will relate because it not only

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confirms that what I have ſaid is the Opinion of ſome of their own *Church*, but ſhows what Liberty the moſt Zealous and Religious of their Faith, will take in their Pulpits.

There was a Company of Stroling Preachers, of the Order of the *Capuchines*, who went about the *French* Kings Dominions, from Town Town, Preaching to the People *Repentance*, and that with ſuch an outward Zeal, that I have ſeen the Smoke come out of one of their Bald Pates, in ſuch a manner, even at *Michaelmas*, that a Boiling Pot ſends out not much more. One of the moſt famous of this Company was ſo followed at *Paris*, that in what ever *Church* he Preach'd, the People not only fill'd the *Church*, but ſtuck about the Windows to catch even now and then a Word of his. This Man being ſo Celebrated, the *Jeſuits* every Year prevail'd with him to Preach the Aniverſary Sermon on St. *Ignatius Loyola*'s Day. But, tired with the Subject, and not very fond of the Society, the *Church* throng'd with Auditors, the laſt time he Preach'd there, having made a great Panegyrick on the Saint, he turn'd his Diſcourſe in this manner, ———

Beloved, ſays he, *the other Night I had a Dream, or a Viſion, or what you will pleaſe to call it; in which methought I ſaw our Bleſſed Saviour ſitting on a Throne, and all the Saints that had been Founders of the Orders about him, every one preferring Petitions in behalf of the Order he had founded.* Firſt *came St.* Benedict, *and obtain'd good fat Monaſtries and Livings; after him came St.* Auſtin, *and he obtain'd the like. St.* Baſil *and* Dominic, *and the reſt came all in their turns, and all got Boons ſuitable to their Deſires. At laſt came St.* Ignatius Loyola, *and humbly requeſts the ſame favour for his* Society, *which ought to be more peculiarly his care, as bearing his Name. Our* Saviour *told him that he came too late, he had given all away to the other* Founders *and their Orders.* ——— *But*, ſays he, Rapite & Capite quodcunque poteſtis. *Rape and ſcrape whatever you can.* ——— *Then the father began to reckon up all they had Cheated others of, what Eſtates they had got, what Money, what Traffick, &c. but went away without being invited to Dinner after* Sermon *as uſual.* All the uſe I ſhall make of this Story is, that it is plain, that the Power, Wealth and Morals of this Society is ſenſible, even to their own Party, and ought much more to be ſo to us and our Holy Religion, which, with an *Hereditary Hate*, they have endeavour'd to Corrupt.

I have little to do with the other Provinces of this Order, the *Engliſh* Province being what more immediately falls under our Conſideration. This Province having ſuch Conſiderable Effects in a *Proteſtant* Country, and that in *Terra Firma*, as well as Caſh, and all liable to Seizure by the Laws of the Land; make uſe of thoſe Principles, defended by *Mariana*, and others of their Order, *viz. Equivocation, mental Reſervation*, &c. Thus Quallify'd they paſs for *Proteſtants* among Men who do not know them, and ſo protect their Property; but in that diſguiſe preſerve their Cloven Foot (as Angels of Darkneſs do, when they aſſume the Form of Angels of Light) and Inſinuate Doctrines deſtructive of the Safety of the *Religion of the Church of England*. In this Shape they promote Diviſions, and Inſpire Fire and Faggot, Blow the Coals of Diſſention, and Inſinuate Principles that are Introductory of *Popery*; they are Encouragers of Drunkenneſs and Licentiouſneſs, by that means to Corrupt our Morals, and by a Jovial Humour, which ſome of them put on, engage abundance of the Young and Thoughtleſs as Boon Companions; and Honeſt Harmleſs Fellows, who finding their Hearers Heart open to what he ſays, makes uſe of the Vicious Credulity, and inſtills Maxims, which are Deſtructive of the Safety of the *Religion of the Church of England*, that is of the Religion Taught by our *Saviour*. The Doctrine, or rather Duty of *Love*, is Ridicul'd by them, and Hot-Headed Rage and Hate exalted, Chriſtian Moderation made a Jeſt, and the pretended Diſciples of the Lord of Peace, will have all War, all draw the Sword in defence of their Maſter with *Peter*; but none put it up at the Rebuke of that Divine Maſter, who wou'd not be ſafe himſelf by the Arm of the Fleſh, and the Miniſtry of Wrath. From hence, therefore, and more particularly from theſe ſeeming Friends, muſt come the greateſt Danger to the *Religion of the Church of England*: That the *Jeſuits* and their Pupils do ſometimes, if not often, impoſe themſelves on the People for *Proteſtants*, will eaſily appear from their Principles, which I have mentioned, an Example of which will make it yet more Evident. In *Somerſetſhire*, there lives one Mr. *Harvey*, a *Romiſh Convert*, by Marrying a Gentlewoman of good Family, and good Fortune. This Lady and Gentleman had for their *Confeſſor* one Mr. *Martin*, a *Jeſuit*, and Brother, if I miſtake not, to a Knight of that Name. In the *Popiſh Plot* time, Mr. *Harvey* was very much Proſecuted about taking the Oaths; to eaſe himſelf he had a great mind to take them, but his Confeſſor, *Martin*, forbad him under pain of *Damna-*

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tion; but having taken them himself to get loose from the hands he had fallen into, his Penitent urg'd that for his Example for doing the like; but that wou'd not do, the Holy Father wou'd not allow it, but Silenc'd him, by telling him, *'Tis true, Sir, I have taken them, but you cannot take them as I did.*

From this I think it beyond Controversie, that the *Jesuits* have a way of taking Oaths peculiar to themselves, that is by Saying one thing, and Meaning another. If so Solemn a thing as taking an Oath, which calls God to Witness the thing Sworn, be not of force to hold them to any Sincerity, how shou'd any Religious Consideration else do it? For those who do this must be *Atheists*, and believe in no God but *Mammon*, to whom they Sacrifice every thing. From these, therefore, our *Holy Religion* must be much in Danger.

When we Consider that there are vast Numbers daily employ'd, by this Society to seduce, the Members of our Church, either in the form of *Protestants*, or as *Papists*, we ought to think the Danger not inconsiderable to our Religion; not that their Zeal for our Souls push them on, but their Zeal for their own Benefit; for the larger the Flock, the more is the Fleece.

Perhaps it wou'd not be Ungrateful to the Reader, to let him know how he may discover these Vermin, so as to avoid them. The Tree is known by the Fruit, when ever you find a Man advancing Principles, Destructive of the Religion of the Church of *England*, either in its Doctrinals or Duties, you may be sure he is either a *Jesuit* or *Atheist*. If you see a Convert from the *Romish Church*, herding with *Jacobites*, and always asserting *Arbitrary Principles*, and an *Illegal Loyalty*, you may be sure he is but a pretended Convert; for it is impossible a Man should sincerely leave the Errors of the **Romish Religion**, and yet desire to promote the very thing that could bring *Popery* on himself and the Nation, that is, *Arbitrary Power*, and the Unaccountableness of Princes. If a Man be a true Convert from *Popery*, he is a perfect *Englishman*, for the Good of his Country, for its security in the Inviolableness of the Laws, without which he is sure to become a Sacrifice to the Resentments of the Party he has forsaken.

To

To conclude with this Society, I must remember you that this Order expends above 100000 *l.* a Year in Intelligence: It is worth our Consideration then how much is disburs'd for discovery of our Councils, which are of such Consequence to our Enemy, who is their chief Patron, especially when that Patrons Grandure and Safety depends entirely on our Destruction and Ruin, and if our *Government* sink, the *Religion of the Church of England* must sink with it.

How much our Divisions imported the *Papists*, may appear from their Zeal in the last Elections, where they generally joyn'd with the *High-Flyers*; but to Palliate the matter by a *Jesmitical Equivocation*, or an Account of some Tye of Blood or Interest, some few Voted on the right side, but took care to let the contrary Party know it, that they might shelter themselves under that pretence from the Exprobations of their Opposites, for having the Body of *Papists* declare for them; as they do in all their Discourse, and in all their Actions.

By this time I hope there is nothing more wanting to make plain, my first Point, that the *Religion of the Church of* England is in Danger from the *Papist*; or if there be, that a Recapitulation of what I have said will do it.

I have therefore made out That the *Papist* bring Danger to the *Religion of the Church of* England, by weakening its Foundation in the Adoration of God, and the Revelation of his Son, by rendering ineffectual the Proofs of it his Miracles, in the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. That the *Papist* does not only do this, but destroys our Morals by Teaching us Insincerity, to say, nay, swear one thing to our Neighbour, and mean another; to hate, nay, give to the Devil our Brother, that agrees not with us in Opinion, to set corrupt Man in the place of God, and make every Prince like the Pope, Infallible, and Unaccountable to Man for his Actions. I have likewise shown the Power, Wealth, and Number of these Spiritual Dragoons; that they are listed under the Pope for his Defence, and the Extirpation of his Opponents; and that they stick at no Wickedness, nor any Hypocrisie to compass their Ends. That they Insinuate into our Company, with plausible Qualities and alluring Vices, so to corrupt the Morals of our Youth, and then their Principles, all which Robs the *Religion of the Church of* England of so many

Members. That they are like the Devil perpetually running up and down, *Seeking whom they may Devour.* That they assume all Forms, and all Religions to compass this End. That nothing contributes more to it, than their Insinuating into our Parties, if they have not the chief Hand in the making of them. That their pretended Loyalty does them great Service to this End, and makes them be caress'd by the Discontented Party so far, as to prevail with several of them to propose a Re-Union of the *Church of England*, and that of *Rome.*

To this I shall add, That the *English Romanists* are far worse, and more dangerous than the Foreign. For the *English*, in all their Conversation, declare for the Success of the Common Enemy of *Europe*, while the Foreign *Papists* fight against him; nay, the Modern *Papist* is worse than the Ancient *Papists* of this Nation. These often resisted the Pope, Establish'd or Recover'd most of our *Liberties*, that some Princes had endeavour'd to Usurp, and left us *Magna Charta*, and our Body of Statutes founded upon that. But the Modern *Papist* would not only surrender all this to a Domestick Prince, but a Foreign. And that which makes them the more dangerous is, that they strike in with many pretended Members of the *Church of England* in these Pernicious Tenents, which first fixing a Friendship with them in Civil Polities, makes the way easie for an Union, likewise in Ecclesiastical Polities, which if effected, good Night to the *Religion of the Church of* England, and all shadow of true *Religion.* I have shown farther, That as it is the Interest of their *Superstition* and *Impiety* to reduce us under the former Darkness of *Popery*, and to hide the Sun-shine of *Pure Religion*, so, being Masters of vast Wealth, and expending 100000 *l.* a Year in Intelligence, it is reasonably to be suppos'd, that great part of it is bestow'd to our Ruin, and the discovery of our Councils and Negotiations, the Strength of our Fleets, and Sailing of our Merchant-Men, and the like; hoping that if they can weaken the *State*, they shall soon be able to oppress the *Religion of the Church of England* effectually. But God is above the Devil, Truth is stronger than Deceit, and the *Religion of the Church of England is founded on a Rock, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

We now come to the next Point, and that is *The Danger of the Church of England from the* Atheist.

There

There are two ſorts of *Atheiſts*, that is, the *Speculative*, and the *Practical*. There have been many Ingenious Men, who have believed that there is ſcarce any ſuch Fool in Nature, as a perfectly *Speculative Atheiſt*: Every thing we *See*, *Feal*, *Hear*, *Taſte*, *Smell*, preſents us with Evidence of an Eternal Cauſe of all things, and of a Cauſe that is Supreamly Rational and Wiſe. We cannot be Senſible of our own Being, but we muſt, at the ſame time, be as Senſible that having an End, we had a Beginning, and having a beginning of Exiſtence, we muſt have ſome Extrintick Cauſe of our Production, whether out of nothing, or out of any Prexiſtent matter; for before we were, we cou'd not make our ſelves to be. Theſe, and many more Demonſtrations, wou'd not ſuffer me to imagine that there cou'd be any *Speculative*, or *Judicial Atheiſt*, ſince, to be ſo, a Man muſt Renounce his Reaſon; yet there are Gentlemen who pretend to a great deal of Underſtanding, who are in Opinion what may be juſtly term'd *Speculative Atheiſt*. And theſe are all your *Scepties*, who, becauſe there are ſome things in Nature which are not in the Compaſs of Underſtanding, and of which Mans Knowledge can take no perfect Cognizance, therefore they will not allow any certainty of any thing. They will deny the Providence of God (which is a denying God himſelf) by advancing ſeveral Weak and Sceptical Doubts about the Humane Adminiſtration of Humane Affairs; and the Conduct of Free-Agents not being obvious to every Vulgar Conſiderer, the falſe appearance is ſwallow'd down, and the Eſſential Attribute of God, the Divine Providence, is Baniſhed with Filthy *Sarcaſm*, and the Company made Merry at the Expence of *Omnipotence*.

If the *Speculative Atheiſt* deſcard, in a Cloud of *Sceptical Doubts*, the Providence of God, which is the Foundation of all *Religion*; you may be certain, that he retains nothing of the Superſtructure, which cannot ſtand without that Foundation. If theſe Abſurdities were only advanc'd to Men of mature Thoughts and Sober Reaſoning, there cou'd be no manner of Danger to the *Religion of the Church of England* from them; but being inſtill'd into *Young Debauchees* over a Bottle, when *Reaſon* is not by to aſſiſt them, they liſten to the *Syren*, and indulge the *Doctrine* that ſets them free from all Reſtraint, Lulls them aſleep in their *Vices*, and bids them not fear the Remorſes of *Conſcience*, or mind the Call of *Religion*; which is only the *Malicious Invention* of *Prieſts* to Rob us of our Pleaſures,

 and

and Enjoyments, and bring us under a Yoke, a Man of Spirit ought not to bear.

I ſuppoſe there is no need of any farther Demonſtration of the Danger of the *Religion of the Church of England* from this *Speculative Atheiſt*, ſince, in deſtroying all *Piety* and *Virtue*, it roots up all *Faith* and *Charity*, and leaves not the leaſt Avenue to *God* open, when it had either totally deny'd that Being, or left it ſo Obſcure that there is Ten to One of the Contrary Side.

The Number of *Practical Atheiſts* is far greater, and much more Dangerous than the *Speculative*, for none admit of the Arguments of this, but thoſe who are gone in *Vice* to a *Profligate Degree*. But the *Practical Atheiſt*, as he is ſelf Condemn'd, and ſo more inexcuſable than the former, ſo is he more Inſinuating into Men that have ſome remains of *Religion* left, and are ſo much the leſs on their guard, as they expect no Enemy near. *Example* is of greater force with moſt Men than *Precept*, becauſe moſt Men are by their *Paſſions* guided more than *Reaſon*; now the *Practical Atheiſt* Wounds by *Example* as well as *Precept*, the firſt he levels at the *Thoughtleſs*, the latter at the pretenders to *Reaſon*; theſe are *Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing*, but may be known, *Firſt*, by *Lewd Debauch'd Lives*, by Ridiculing the *Anſterities* of *Manners*, at the ſame time that they pretend Zeal for *Religion*, eſpecially if they be *Miniſters* (for there remain too many *Judas*'s among the *Clergy* ſtill) they are the more Dangerous for their *Swearing*, *Drinking*, *Whoring*, *Gaming*, and Neglect of the *Moral Duties*, eaſily paſs into imitation, eſpecially if they have *Wit* and *Learning*, as ſome of them have. And here the *Religion of the Church* is in Danger from Her own *Teachers* moſt; this driving out many that are Entred, and forbidding more to Enter themſelves *Members* of a *Religion*, that has ſuch *Teachers*. Next, all thoſe who Exalt *Man* to an Equality with *God*, and by a new ſort of *Tranſubſtantiation*, wou'd perſwade us, That tho' we ſee a Prince more *Weak*, more *Ignorant*, more *Vicious*, more *Cruel* than any of the reſt of Men; yet we muſt believe him Supreamly *Wiſe*, more *Wiſe* than *Councils* of the moſt *Grave*, *Wiſe*, and *Experienced* of any *Nation*, *Good* as the moſt *Innocent* and *Pious*, *Infallible* as the *Pope*, and not to be Queſtioned or Oppoſed. This ſort of *Atheiſt* are all our *High-Flyers* or *Jacobites*, who have alſo another Mark of the *Beaſt*, which is when they make new Articles of *Faith*; on the belief of which

which they entail *Damnation*, tho' they are not so much as *Duties*. Such are *Passive Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*, and their Defenders, as *Lesley*, and his Brood; who, tho' there be not one Text of *Scripture* for their *Arbitrary Maxims*, *Prophanely* and *Impiously* Torture one or two Obscure Texts, to make them ever, tho' very Lamely, confess their *Sense*. What was done by a *Painter* about the *Poets*, and *Homer* wou'd hold of the present Advocates of Slavery and *Filmer*, for they ought to be drawn licking up the Spew of *Filmer*, for so it is without Metaphor.

If it be obvious to Men of common Sense that the Destruction of *Vertue* is Dangerous to *Religion*, I hope it will be no doubt to any, but that a Practical *Atheist* is Dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of England*.

That it is so, from the *Deists* too, is evident from the Tenents of these Sparks, since they deny all *Revealed Religion*, and Treat *it* as a *Forgery* and *Imposture*; so that they must infallibly be dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of* England, which is entirely Built upon *it*.

They are the more dangerous as being too often Men of plausible *Parts* and voluble *Tongues*; and are divided into the *Debauchee* and *Philosophick Deist*. The first is little different from the *Speculative Atheist*; for tho' he owns a *Deity*, or *First Cause*, like *Hobbs*, he denies that we know any thing of him, but *that he is*, which is of no more force on the Actions of Men, than if we deny'd that *Eternal Being*. For if we know not what will Please or Displease *Him*, 'tis the same thing to us, as if we had no Knowledge at all of his Existence. Nay, it is worse, and more Destructive of our *Tranquility* and *Quiet*; for it throws us into a *Perplexity*, which the total denial of him wou'd free us from; for then we cou'd at least please our selves, but having a *Fear* of Displeasing the *First Cause* of *All things*, when we know not what will Please him, gives a Perpetual Alarm, and Uneasiness, without Influencing us at all to what is *Good*, because we know not what that is.

Many of these are the more Dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of* England, because they mingle with the *High-Church* in their Interests, so as to engage too many, out of Zeal to a Party, to swallow

ſwallow Notions from the Mouth of One they think a great Man of their Side, as prejudicial to *Religion* as the *State*. Both here being to cloſely United, what ever brings Danger to the *State*, muſt bring Danger to the *Religion of the Church of* England.

Theſe are the chief Dangers to the *Religion of the Church of* England, and worthy the Zeal of thoſe who pretend ſo much for the *Church* it ſelf: For my part I cann't imagine on what Grounds of *Reaſon* they were ſo very *Hot* and *Noiſie* for the Out-Works of the *Church*, when it was far more in Danger from Within; as is evident from what I have ſaid. But it is a plain caſe that they cou'd not be real *Zealots* for the ſafety of the *Church*, who made ſuch a Noiſe about Danger where there was none, and took no Notice of it, where it viſibly was. I once heard a Jolly, Drunken Gentleman in Black, in Raptures on Her Majeſties firſt Speech in Parliament, becauſe there was not a Word of *Cant*, as he call'd it, no *Immorality*, and *Prophaneſs*, or cautions about it; as there us'd to be in thoſe of King *William*, whom, for that and ſome other *Reaſon*, he cou'd not forgive. I confeſs I was ſurpriz'd to hear a *Divine* ſo Angry with Him for promoting *Virtue*; but, I ſuppoſe, by this time Her Majeſty is equally Obnoxious.

Let the *High-Flyers* therefore Whiſper no more *The Danger of the Church*, till they have ſecured the *Religion of the Church*, againſt the *Immoralities* and *Prophaneſs* of Her Members, againſt the *Papiſt*, *Atheiſt* and *Deiſt*.

This puts me in mind of my third Diviſion; and that is of the *Diſſenters*. There are Men who have endeavour'd to place the *Danger of the Church* at the *Diſſenters* Door; let us examine if we can lay the *Danger of the Religion of the Church* at the ſame Door. Tho', I confeſs, it is but a very unlucky *Omen* for our Undertaking, ſince all the ſtir that has been made, has not been able to perſwade the *Queen*, the *Lords* and *Commons* of *England*, in *Parliament* Aſſembled, that the *Church* was in any Danger from them.

However, not to be frightned by this ill Succeſs, we muſt conſider whether or no, we cannot, in a few Lines, fix a Scandal on them, which thoſe Gentlemen cou'd not.

I know the *Diſſenters* will ſay we Teach, for the moſt part, the ſame *Doctrines*, and the ſame *Moral Duties*; we are Active in ſuppreſſing *Immorality* and *Prophaneſs*; we advance *Principles* of *Government*, on which our preſent Eſtabliſhment is fix'd; we endeavour to keep our *Clergy Regular*, *Learned*, and *Pious*; and wou'd Diſcard any we knew to be otherwiſe. And if Men of theſe *Principles*, and this *Practice* are Dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of* England, we are; if not, there can be no more Danger coming from us to the *Religion of the Church of* England, than to the *Church*.

To all this I ſhall make but one plain Anſwer: For what purpoſe ſhou'd we multiply Words, where a few will do the Work? And what need of ſeeking many Arguments to prove what may be fully as well done by me, or not at all. I muſt therefore tell the *Diſſenters* to their Teeth, and how well they will take it of me I am not Solicitous to enquire; That their *Doing* and *Teaching* the ſame with the *Religion of the Church of* England, makes all the *High-Flyers*, and other *Anti-Diſſenters* forſake the *Doctrines* and *Precepts* of that *Religion*, that they may not *Do* any thing, nor *Say*, nor *Think* any thing that a *Diſſenter* does; for they have told you in *Print*, *That they can join on Terms with the* Pope, *but on none with the* Diſſenter. Since, therefore, this Antipathy to you *Diſſenters*, makes ſo many forſake the *Religion of the Church of* England, it is plain you *Diſſenters* are Dangerous to the *Religion of the Church of* England. If this will not ſatisfie you of the Validity of my Aſſertion, I refer you the Adreſs of the Lower Houſe of *Convocation*, where, among their Reaſons of the Danger of the *Church*, you will amply find what you ſeek, or no where. *Adieu*.

F I N I S.